

Congress of the United States House of Representatives

May 17, 2007

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi Speaker of the House H-232, U.S. Capitol Washington, D.C. 20515

Madame Speaker:

With the Memorial Day work period nearly upon us, we are writing today to urge you to keep the House in session until Congress completes work on a clean troop funding bill the President can sign into law. There is no more important issue – and no more important work to be done – than providing our troops with the resources they need to succeed against al Qaeda and helping the Iraqis stabilize their young democracy.

Every American wants to see more progress in Iraq and no one is satisfied with the current results, but our troops deserve our full support. We know the bill passed by the House last week will be vetoed by the President. We know that our generals cannot be expected to conduct a successful war effort under political pressure from Washington, with resources rationed and tied to arbitrary conditions. And we know the consequences of further funding delays are serious, whether for the well-being and readiness of our troops, the success of their mission, or the long-term national security of the United States.

Secretary Gates told the Senate last week the war effort will be severely disrupted if Congress doesn't quickly pass a clean troop funding bill. He cited al Qaeda efforts to "use Anbar province as another base from which to plan operations not only inside Iraq, but first of all in the neighborhood and then potentially against the United States." Also last week, thousands of our men and women in uniform delivered an "Appeal for Courage" to Congress, urging lawmakers to fully fund their mission and stop calls for retreat. More than 3,000 of our men and women in uniform have now signed this petition.

Members of both of our parties have urged our Iraqi friends to reconsider their decision to take time off for a district work period while important work remains outstanding – we should be willing to take our own advice. This funding request has been pending since February 5, 2007. The time to deliver is now.

We urge you to keep the House in session until the House and Senate produce a clean troop funding bill the President can sign. Anything less is unbefitting the sacrifice of our troops.

Sincerely,

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